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OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

## United States Department of the Interior **National Park Service**

## **National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form**

E.C.W. Architecture in Mo. State Parks T.R.

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### Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park

Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park is located in the rolling hills of the Missouri Rive: border country in the western part of St. Louis County, approximately thirty-two miles from downtown St. Louis. Prominent businessman Jacob Babler donated 868 acres in 1934 to establish the park as a memorial to his late brother Edmund, a distinguished St. Louis surgeon. Subsequent gifts of the Babler family and purchases by the state increased the size of the park to over 2,000 acres. In 1935, two CCC companies began developing the park for public recreation. Three hundred WPA workers assisted in construction of park roads and other park projects. During the following year, Jacob Babler established a trust fund to provide for the present and future maintenance of the facilities. At dedication ceremonies in 1938, the Babler family unveiled a full-length bronze statue of Dr. Edmund A. Babler in the park. In recent years the park has become the home of the Jacob L. Babler Outdoor Education Center for the Handicapped, providing year-round opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, fishing, camping, crafts, archery and nature study in the park's facilities, the majority of which werebuilt by the CCC. This park has been nominated as a historic district.

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

E.C.W. Architecture in Mo. State Parks
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## The Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park Historic District

#### Description

The Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park Historic Dirstrict comprises some twenty-tw buildings and structures of historical and arcitectural significance erected by the Civilian Conservation Corps, with the assistance of WPA relief workers, between 1935 and 1941. During their years of activity in the park, relief workers laid eight miles of road, quarried stone for many beautiful buildings, and constructed a stone entranceway, a concession center, stables, shelters, a small residence, bridges, service buildings, comfort stations, and an imposing lodge on a rugged tract southwest of St. Louis, Missouri. The largest of these structures are the handsome lodge, the stone stable, and a cruciform picnic shelter. The stable at Babler is the only one built by the CCC that is still in use as a stable in a Missouri state park. The equestrian underpasses are notable for their nearly flat segmental arches and massive stone wing walls (Photo #3). The stonework at Babler is of exceptional quality. Wall treatments are generally of rough random ashlar with distinctive stone detailing at the cornices (Photo #19). Wide roads constructed by relief workers feature ston curbing and guttering (Photo #2). To a surprising degree, this park retains the character imparted to it by the National Park Service and New Deal relief workers during the Depression Era. One of its most pleasant qualitites is a feeling of openness, with broad lanes, spaciou picnic areas, and lush wooded hills. Buildings are widely separated and in many cases screened by hills and trees. Modern intrusions include a new superintendent's residence, a pool and tennis courts, and several new service buildings. The Jacob A. Babler Handicapped Center, a complex of modern buildings, is located at the extreme southwestern edge of the district.

Buildings and structures that contribute to the quality of the district are, as follows:

<u>Bal</u>, <u>Main Entrance</u>: 1938 wing walls of cut stone flanking the wide park road at its intersection with Highway 109.

Ba2 Equestrian Underpass: 1935-1941 tall stone-faced bridge with single segmental arch over horse trail under main park road, approximately one mile from park entrance.

Ba3 Equestrian Underpass: 1935-1941 tall stone-faced bridge with single segmental arch over equestrian trail under park road, approximately one-fourth mile east of the stable.

<u>Ba4 Vehicle Bridge</u>: 1936-1937 rustic bridge of concrete construction with stone facings, two segmental arches, stone head walls and wing walls, located in a little-used area near the northern boundry of the park.

Ba5 (2) Park Office (Well House): 1936 small (16' x 24') rectangular building of random rubble construction, stone dentilation, steeply-pitched hip roof, small entrance portico (added), concrete foundation, small four-paned double-hung windows, eyebrow dormer in rear. Originally a well house located near the encampment of CCC Company 3763, the building now contains an office, storage room, and lavatory.

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- Ba6 (3) Shelter and Rest Room: 1935-1941 small (10' x 12') stone building with rest room in basement (entered from rear), pitched front-gable roof, random rubble wall treatment, arched door opening, quoins, concrete foundation. Just west of the building is a stone patio on which a mobile home is now anchored; just north of the building is an outdoor fireplace of cu stone. A flight of stone steps goes down to the restroom in the rear. This shelter is no longer in use.
- Ba7 (4) Service Building: 1935-1941 two-story barn-like service building, gambrel roof. horizontal oak siding, cross-hatched doors, six-by-six casement windows, located southeast of the old Park-Keeper's Cottage.
- Ba8 (7) Old Shed (Old Stonecutter's Shed): 1935-1941 rectangular shed, front-gable roof, roo covering of galvanized sheet metal, wood construction, vertical siding, badly deteriorated.
- Ba9 (16) Warehouse Number 1: 1935-1941 sixteen-bay garage/warehouse, side-gable roof, wood siding; rear of building is set against hillside; located near new Superintendent's Residence
- Balo (17) Warehouse Number 2: 1935-1941 large rectangular service building, side-gable roof in saltbox form, roof projection over concrete loading dock. This building is located in a service court, with serveral new service buildings in a secluded area near the southern boundry of the park.
- Ball (18) Rest Room in Alta Area: 1935-1941 small (15' x 30') rectangular building of rough random ashlar construction, distinctive detailing at cornices, hip roof, stone chimney on west side, decorative voussoirs over ten small windows. Located near picnic shelter in alta Area.
- Bal2 (20) Open Picnic Shelter in Alta Area: 1935-1941 large cruciform shelter, four-sided central fireplace, stone walls (31/2' high), cross-qable roof supported by heavy timber posts and struts, horizontal wood siding at gable ends, flagstone floor set in concrete, built-in wooden benches. Note the long, sweeping stone retaining walls along the edge of the picnic area, stone curbing in parking area.
- Bal3 (21) Lodge: 1935-1941 large rambling one-and-one-half-story building, rough random ashlar construction, concrete foundation, cross-gable roof, irregular floor plan, with north wing extending at an angle from the main block, two-story projecting bay containing arched entrance portico. Located at the top of a gentle slope in a secluded area in the northeastern corner of the park.
- Bal4 (22) Rest Room in Cochran Area (formerly Hillwood Picnic Area): 1935-1941 small (15' x 30') rectangular building, abutting hillside, medium-pitched hip roof, rough random ashlar construction, characteristic cornice treatment, small windows, stone lintels, stone chimney, located near Cochran Area shelter.

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Bal5 (23) Shelter in Cochran Area (formerly Hillwood Picnic Area): 1936-1937 stone and timbe shelter with enclosed rear alcove containing stone fireplace, massive stone chimney on rear wall, hip roof (gabled hip over the alcove), heavy wooden roof supports, open wood beam ceiling in octagonal open shelter area.

Bal6 (26) Residence (Park Keeper's Cottage): 1935-1936 small (24' x 45') one-and-one-half-story frame cottage, stone foundation, gable roof, small entrance porch with wood railing suggestive of Swiss chalet.

Bal7 (28) Old Concession Building: 1935-1941 stone building, L-shaped plan, medium-pitched cross-gable roof, bay window in front-facing wing, pediment over stone entrance porch, double front doors, casement windows, stone sills and lintels. Formerly the Concession Building. this building now houses a museum and nature center.

Bal8 (29) Rest Room in Old Concession Area: 1935-1941 small (22' x 25') rectangular building of random cut stone construction, front-gable roof, horizontal wood siding at gable ends. small entry porch with shed-style roof supported by timber posts and struts, small single-sas windows, stone sills, wooden lintels. There is a rustic wooden footbridge between this rest room and the Old Concession Building. This bridge is not original, but has been reconstructed in the style of the original bridge erected here by the CCC.

Bal9 (30) Contact Station: 1935-1941 truncated building of smooth cut stone, formerly housing the contact booth, now anchoring the park logo and a map of the park.

Ba20 (32) Rest Room in Crystal Spring Area: small (15' x 20') rectangular stone building. rough random ashlar, characteristic cornice treatment, hip roof, eyebrow dormer (ventilator) in center front portion of roof, stone sills, decorative voussoirs above small windows. This building has not been used for several years and has suffered from neglect.

Ba21 (33) Rest Room in Walnut Grove Area: small (14' x 32') rectangular building of random cut stones in a variety of shapes and sizes, side-gable roof, small pedimented entry porch with timber supports, small windows just under the eave line, stone sills, wooden lintels.

Ba22 (34) Stable: large L-shaped building of random cut stone, stable-keeper's office in mail block, stables in elongated rear ell, medium-pitched cross-gable roof, heavy timbers used for decorative effects at gable ends, pedimented entry porch in front, shed-style dormers and small cupola on roof of rear ell.

Non-contributing structures located within the district boundaries are, as follows:

Swimming Pool, Bath House Concession, Filter House, Tennis Courts, built in the 1960's.

Superintendent's Residence (1): modern ranch-style house, located just south of the main park road, near Warehouse #1.

Jacob L. Babler Handicapped Center complex.

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Water tower in Alta Area (19): steel tower, possibly constructed by CCC, but adding little t the district.

Garage (27); small modern garage behind Park Keeper's Cottage.

Stable Keeper's Residence (35): frame cottage constructed ca. 1941, altered, and in deplapidated condition.

Service buildings: two modern service buildings located just east of Warehouse #2.

\*Numbers in parentheses are in-house inventory numbers used by the Missouri Division of Parks and Historic Preservation.

#### Significance

The Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park Historic District has exceptional significance according to the criteria of evaluation under definitions A and C to wit: it is associated with Emergency Conservation Work involving the labor of CCC enrollees and WPA workers of the New Deal era, a major historical development of the twentieth century; it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the rustic architecture promoted by the National Park Service in the years before World War II. Architecture and Landscape Architecture: The buildings and structures of stone and timber in this park are superb examples of sturdiness, simplicity, and exquisite craftsmanship in the rustic tradition. Placement of buildings at wide intervals in insconspicuous locations, with screening from hillsides and trees, reflects the National Park Service principle of subordination of man-made structures to the natural setting. The park road, constructed by relief workers, is notable for its meandering design and rustic stone curbing and guttering. Social/Humanitarian: The ambitious park development project at Babler provided needed work relief for young CCC enrollees and WPA workers. The social/humanitarian values of the park project were well stated by Jacob Babler, who donated the land to the On October 9, 1983, the St. Louis Glode-Democrat quoted Mr. Babler as saying that the relief workers engaged in the project were "saved from the influences of pool halls and bad company and made into men, strong and healthy."

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<u>Conservation—Recreation</u>: Development of this state park made possible the conservation of a large wooded tract in a rapidly urbanizing area just thirty—two miles from downtown St. Louis. The park, established during the Great Depression, continues to provide significant recreational facilities for citizens of the surrounding urban area as well as visitors from other parts of Missouri and neighboring states.

## Bibliography

Babler Memorial State Park, SP-16, Bi-monthly Progess Reports, NPS Archives, NARS.

Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Division of Parks and Historic Preservation. Archives. Jefferson City, Mo.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat, October 9, 1938.

Schneider, Arthur A. <u>Appraisal Report</u>: <u>Babler Memorial State Park</u>. Mo. State Park Board. 1970.

Wood, Jack, "Jacob Babler: His Contribution to the State Park Movement in Missouri," in Missouri Historical Society Bulletin (July 1959), pp. 285-295.

Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property: Approximately 2,325 acres.

Quadrangle name: Weldon Spring, Mo., and Eureka, Mo.

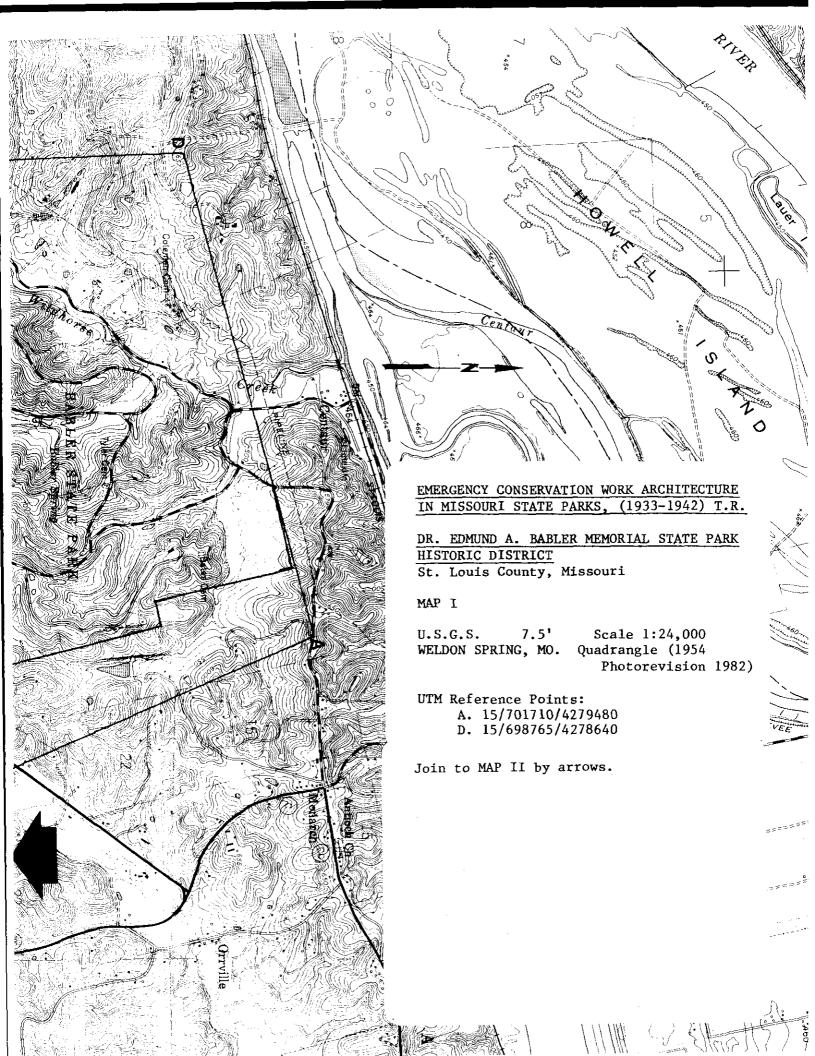
Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

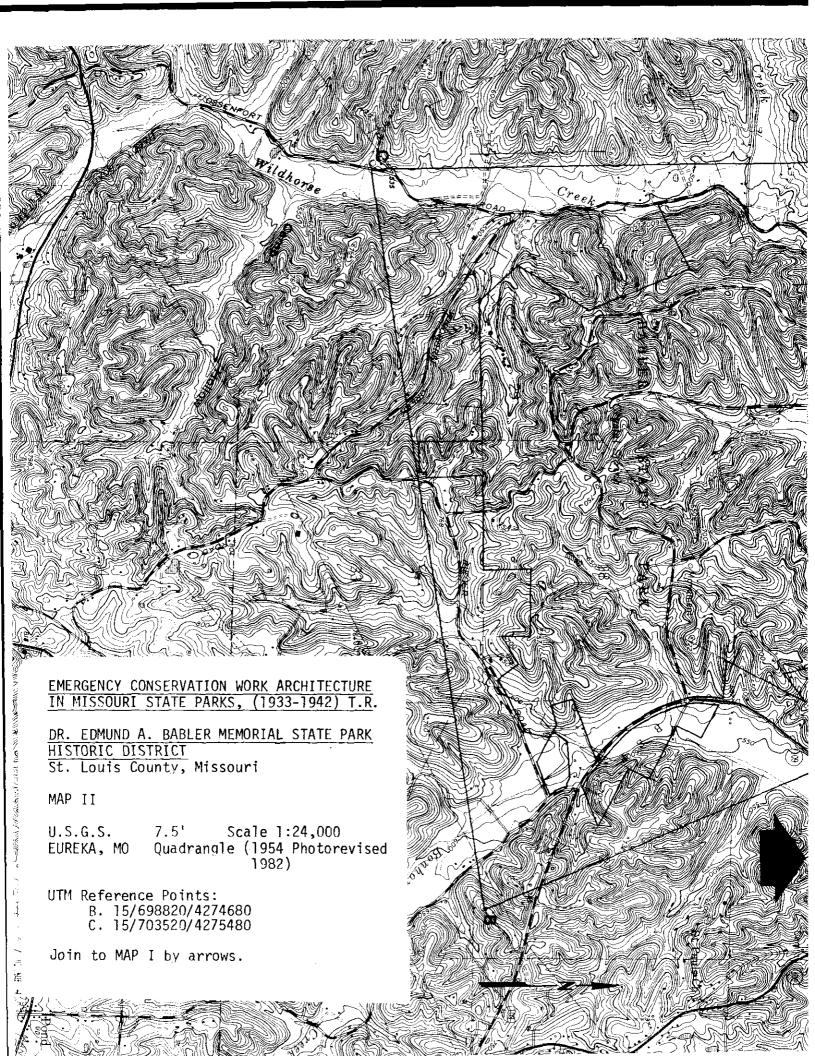
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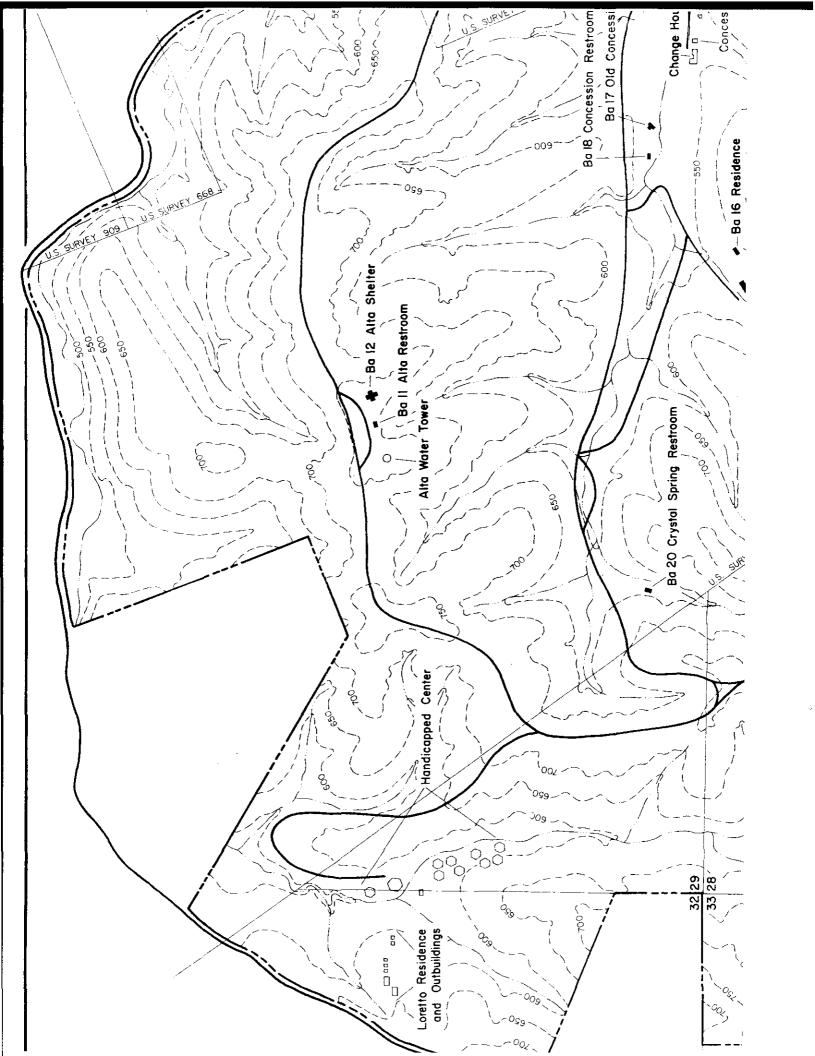
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- B 15/698820/4274680
- C 15/703520/4275480
- D 15/698765/4278640

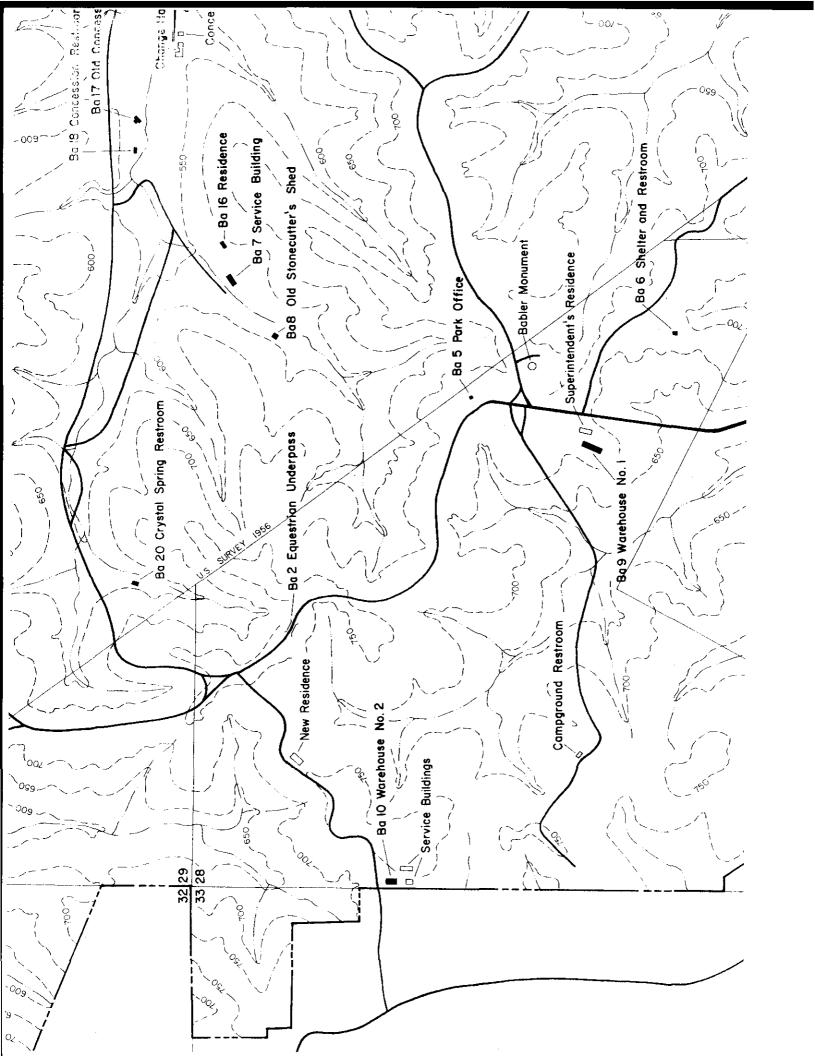
#### Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

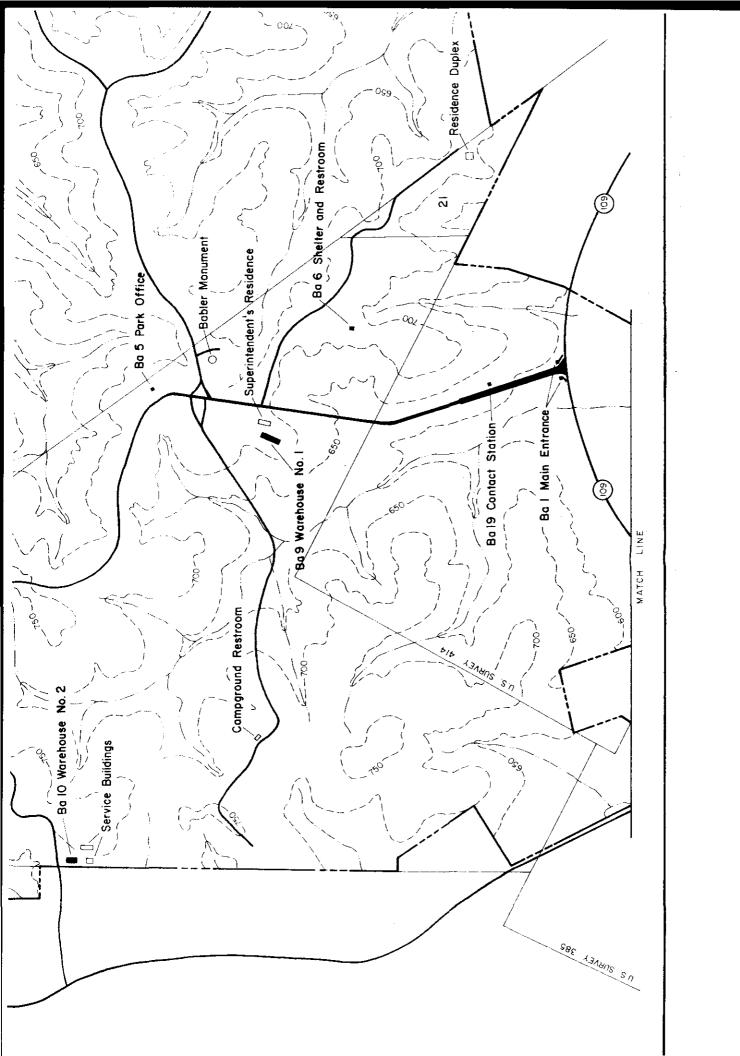
The boundaries of the nominated property are clearly indicated on the appended maps (U.S.G.S. map and district map) and are defined as the original (1934) boundaries of Dr. Edmund A. Babler State Park, excluding those parcels of land that were included in the original tract but are not included within the present state park.

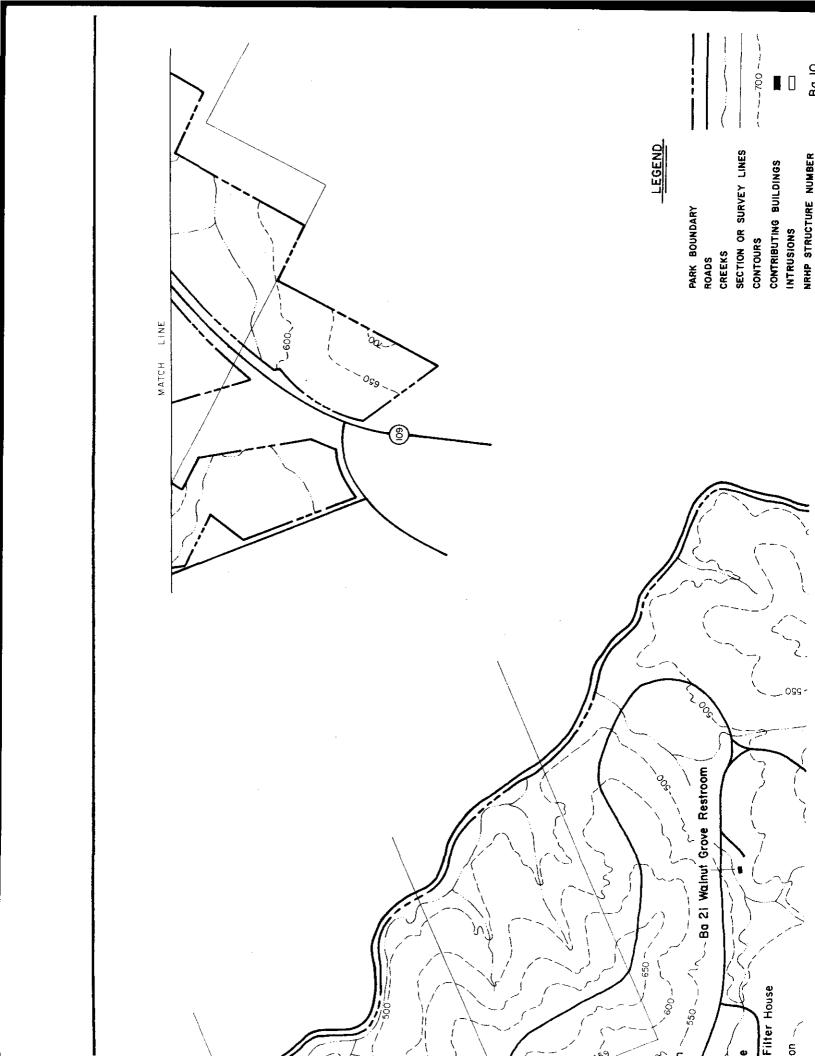


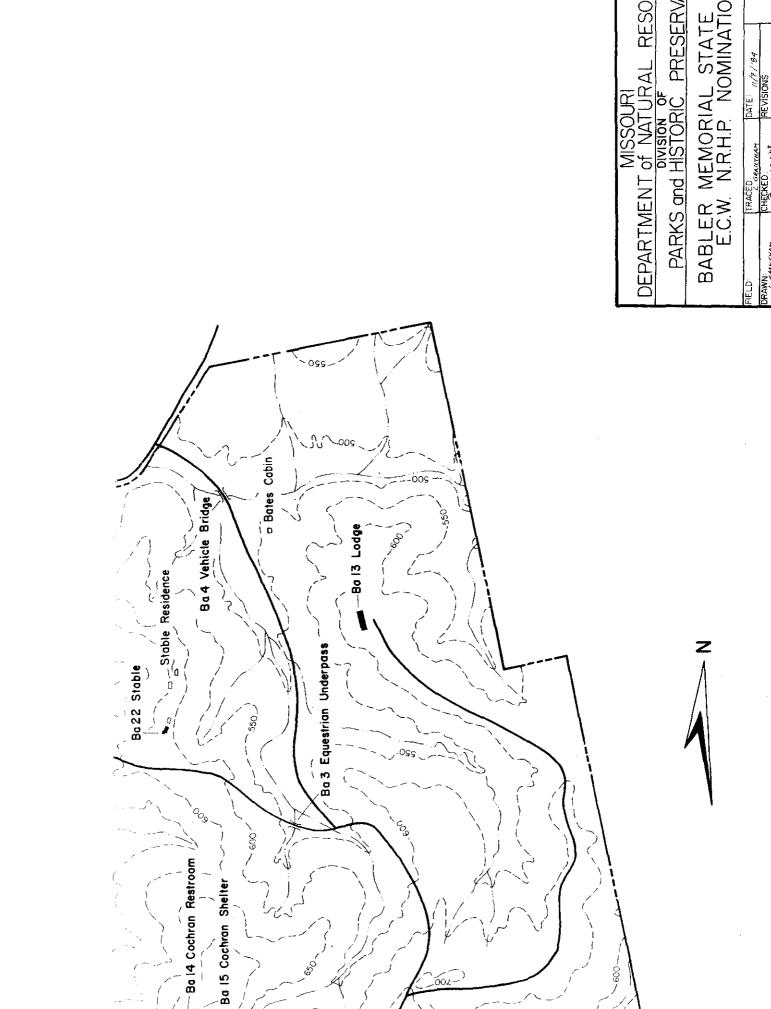












BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PL E.C.W. N.R.H.P. NOMINATION **FURAL RESOUR PRESERVATI** 

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DR. ELMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Lodge (Bal3) St. Louis County, Missouri

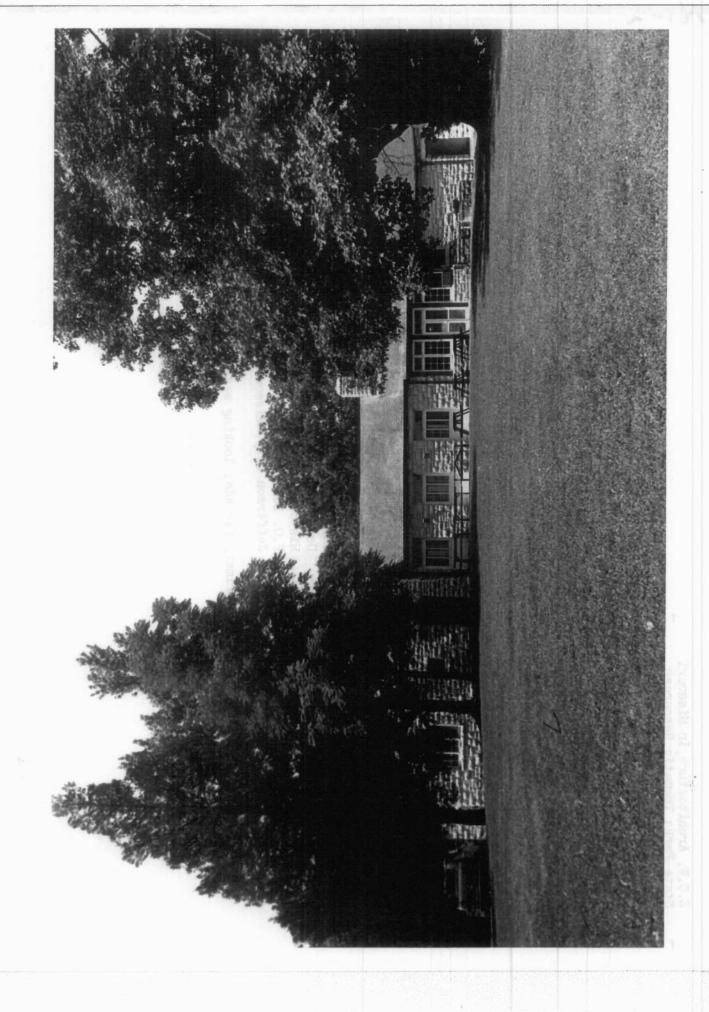
Photographer: Judith Deel June 1982 Date:

Neg. Loc.:

Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

View of primary fac ade; looking west.

#16 of 27



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E.C.W. Architecture in Missouri State Parks Thematic Resources

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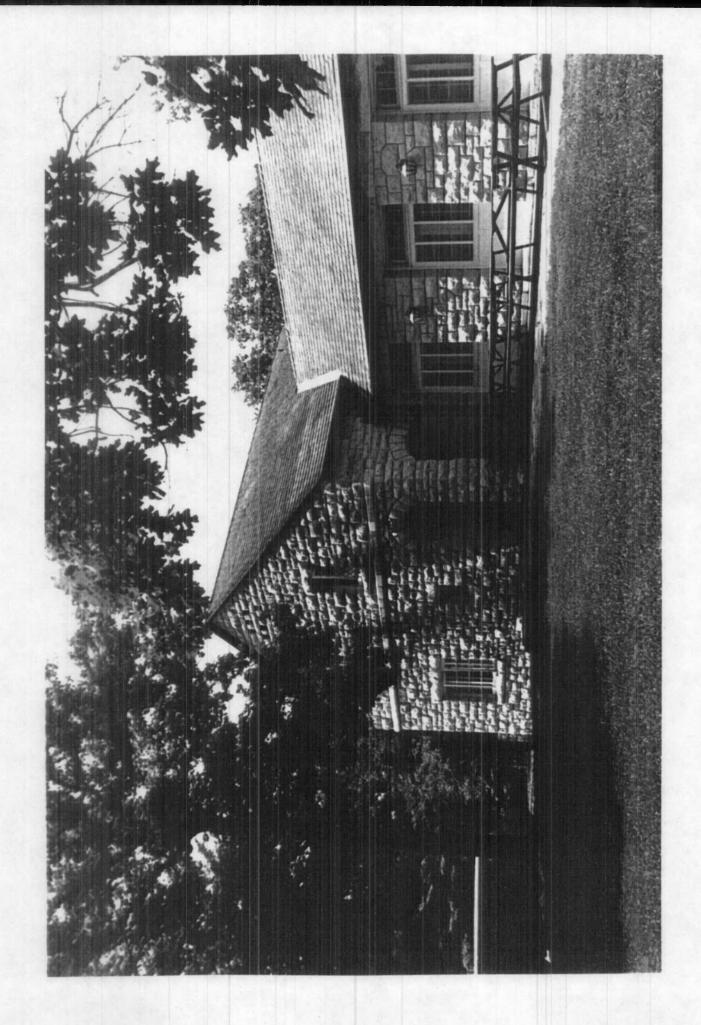
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DR. EDMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Lodge (Bal3) St. Louis County, Missouri

Photographer: Judith Deel
Date:
June 1982
Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

View of projecting bay, primary facade; looking northwest.

#17 of 27



DR. EIMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Rest Room, Cochran Area (Bal4) St. Louis County, Missouri

Photographer: Judith Deel

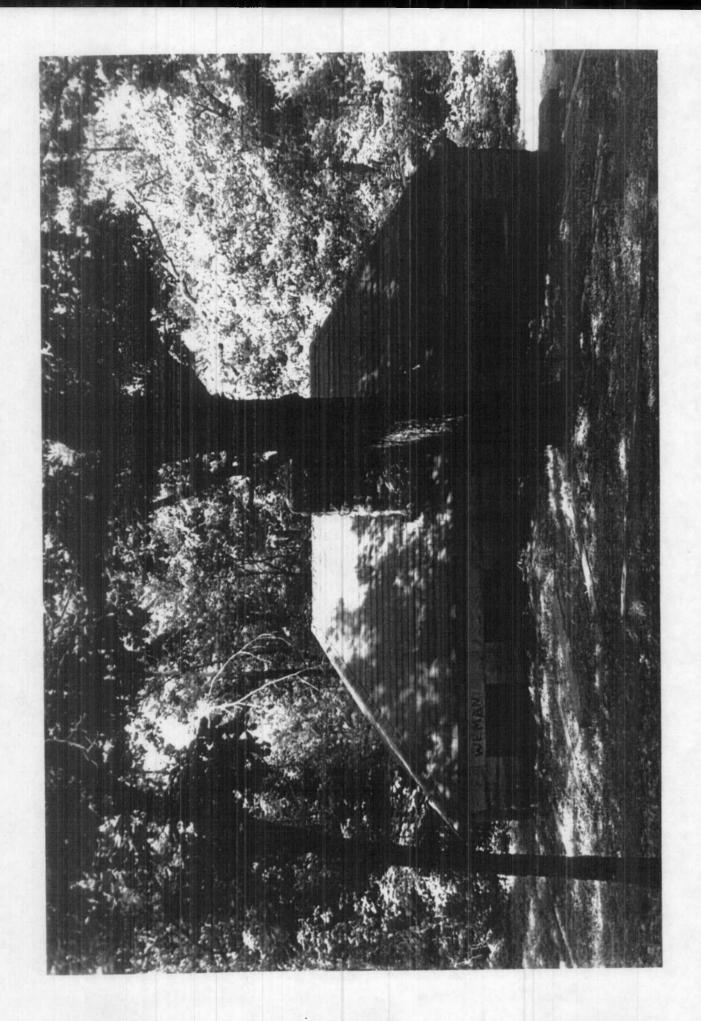
Date: June 1982 Neg. Loc.: Department of

Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

View of rear of building, screened by hillside and trees; looking southwest.

#18 of 27



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DR. EDMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Rest Room, Cochran Area (Bal4) St. Louis County, Missouri Photographer: Judith Deel
Date:
Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

View of stone steps and east side of building; looking west.

#19 of 27



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E.C.W. Architecture in Missouri State Parks Thematic Resources

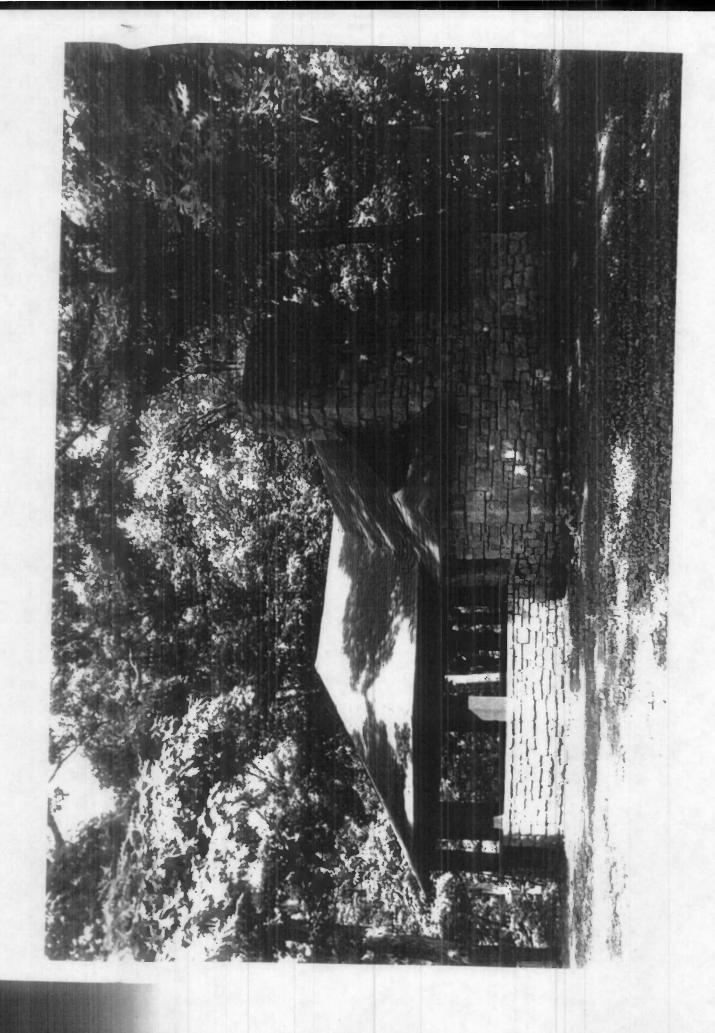
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DR. EDMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Shelter House, Cochran Area (Bal5) St. Louis County, Missouri Photographer: Judith Deel
Date:
June 1982
Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources
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P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

View of enclosed rear alcove and south side of shelter; looking north.

#20 of 27

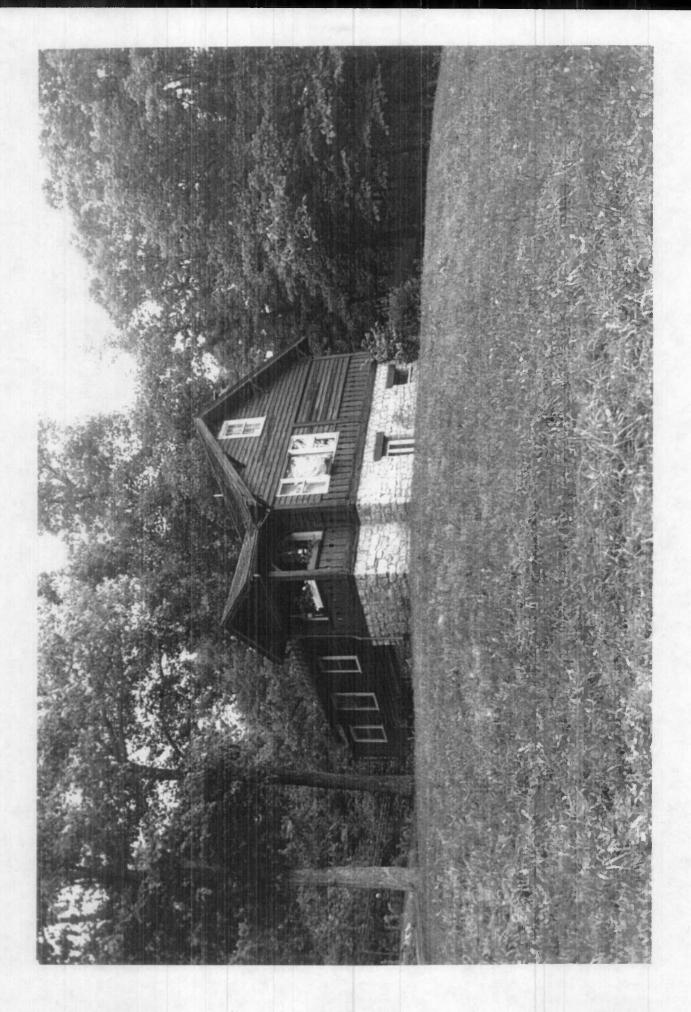


E.C.W. Architecture in Missouri State - Parks, 1933-1942, Thematic Resources -

DR. EDWUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Residence (Bal6) St. Louis County, Missouri Photographer: Bonnie Wright
Date: September 14, 1984
Neg. Loc.: Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
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General view; looking east.

#21 of 27



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DR. EDMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Old Concession Building (Bal7) St. Louis County, Missouri

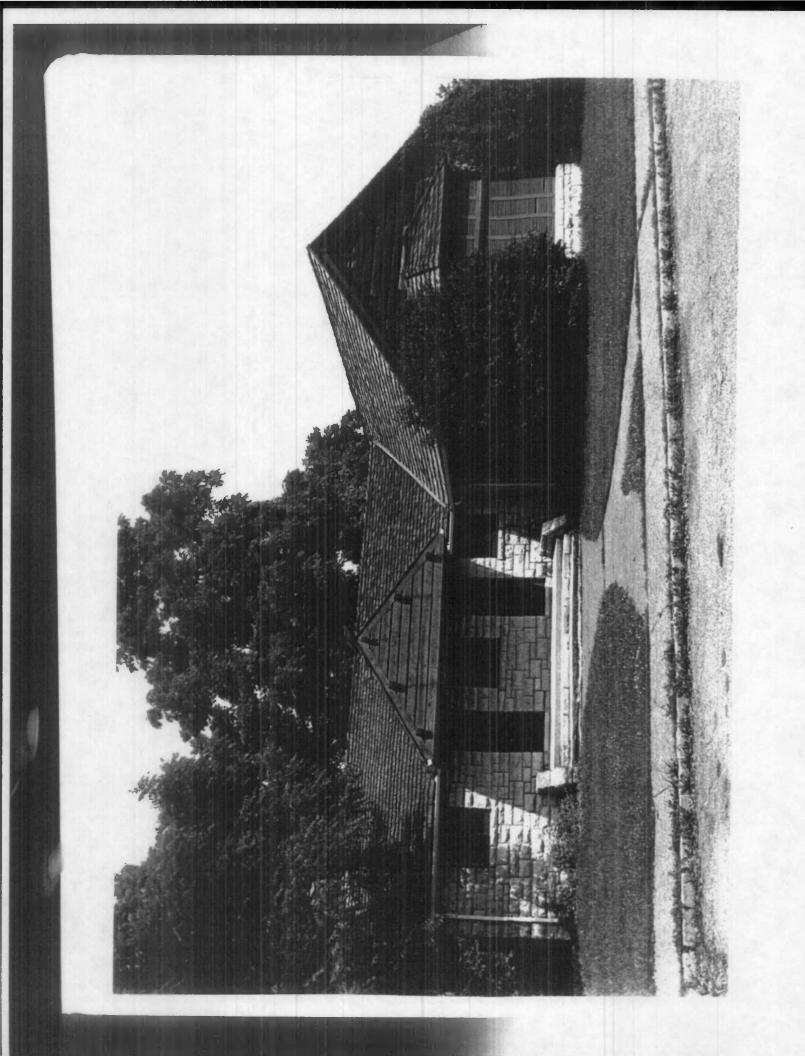
Photographer: Judith Deel

Date: June 1982

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View of primary facade with gable-fronted wing; looking northwest.

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E.C.W. Architecture in Missouri State Parks Thematic Resources

DR. EIMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Rest Room, near Old Concession Building (Bal8)

St. Louis County, Missouri

Photographer: Judith Deel
Date:
June 1982
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View of east side and primary facade; looking northwest.

#23 of 27



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DR. EDMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Contact Station (Bal9)
St. Louis County, Missouri

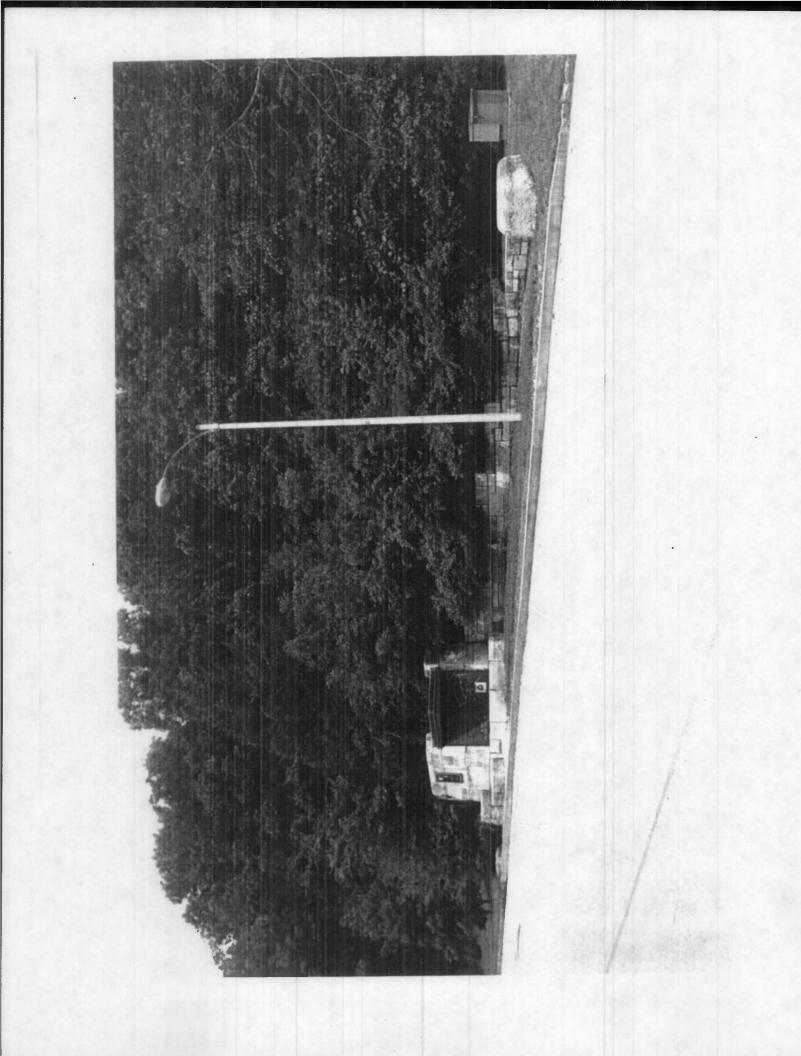
Photographer: Judith Deel

Date: June 1982 Neg. Loc.: Department

Joc.: Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

View of structure on north side of park road; looking west.

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DR. ELMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Rest Room, Crystal Spring Area (Ba20) St. Louis County, Missouri Photographer: Judith Deel

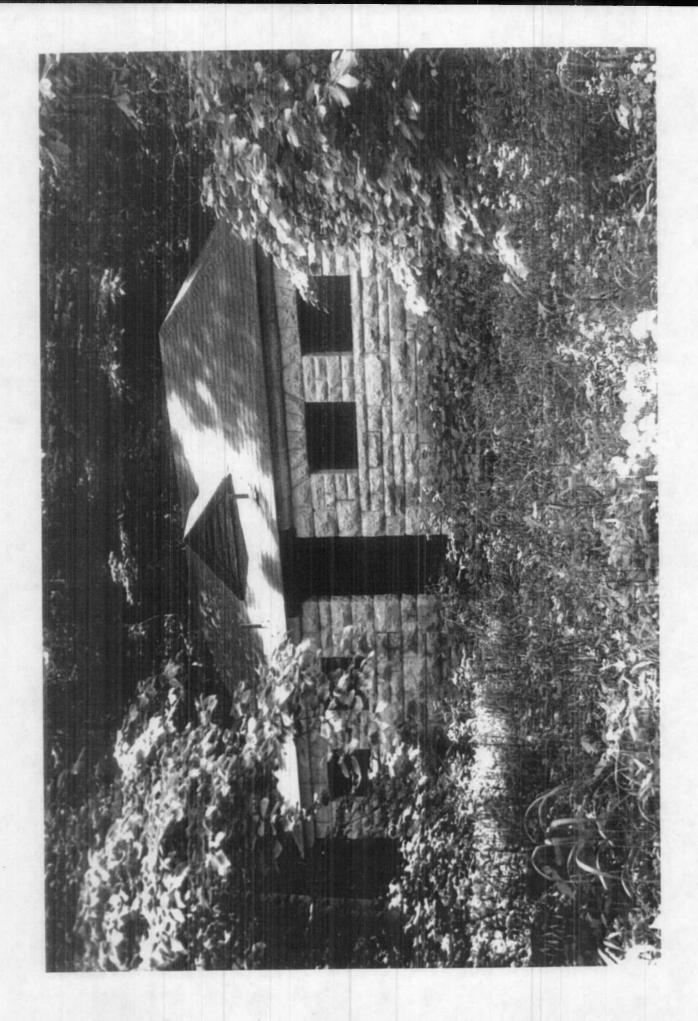
Date:
July 2, 1982

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Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

View of primary facade; looking south.

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DR. EIMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Rest Room, Walnut Grove Area (Ba21) St. Louis County, Missouri

Photographer: Judith Deel

June 1982 Date: Neg. Loc.:

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View of primary facade; looking southwest.

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DR. EDMUND A. BABLER MEMORIAL STATE PARK Stables (Ba22) St. Louis County, Missouri

Photographer: Judith Deel

June 1982 Date:

Department of Natural Resources Neg. Loc.:

Historic Preservation Program P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

General view of stable office and stables;

looking east.

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